

‘Packed with Comedy and Very Engaging’

Chantilly High
presents
“Thoroughly
Modern Millie.”

BY BONNIE HOBBS

Featuring a cast of 40 and a crew of 25, “Thoroughly Modern Millie” will soon burst upon the Chantilly High stage. And Director Andy Shaw says this lively, musical comedy is sure to entertain.

“The characters are big and goofy, and the production showcases all the different types of musical-theater songs,” he said. “It’s a fun musical and a really sweet love story about how two people looking for completely different things in life end up finding each other.”

The story takes place in New York City in 1922, and Vogue magazine has said that modern girls marry their bosses, so Millie picks one who’s handsome and rich. But when she meets Jimmy, who likes to party and have fun, she gets distracted and falls in love with him.

The curtain rises Thursday, Friday, Saturday, April 19-21, and Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, April 25-27, at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$12 at the door or via www.chantillyhsdrama.com.

“We really have strong, hardworking actors and singers, and a great tech team, too,” said Shaw. “And our choreographer, senior Carolan Corcoran, did all the numbers. She’s been amazing to work with and commanded the students’ respect, and they love her. This show has numbers ranging from tap to ballet, Charleston and ballroom, and she did a wonderful job teaching to all the different levels of dancers we have.”

The boys will be dressed in classic, period suits, and the girls will have bobbed hairstyles and wear flapper dresses with fringe, long beads, fur shawls and hats. The scenes will take place at a two-story hotel complete with an elevator, plus Millie’s workplace, and attendees will also see the New York skyline.

Junior Lauren Spiers portrays Millie. (Her understudy, Haley Herman, will perform in the April 25 show). “Millie’s 22 and deter-



Rehearsing a scene are (standing, from left) Emily Draut, Annie Silva, Elise McCue, Valerie Mellard and Molly Marsh, and (seated, from left) Caroline Woodson, Lauren Spiers and Kylee Downie.

mined to get what she wants,” said Spiers. “She’s not afraid to put herself out there and always follows her goals, no matter what it takes. She wants to get a job and marry someone rich — her boss. She’s just moved from Kansas and wants to succeed in New York.”

Spiers loves her role because, she, too, has strong self-determination. “Millie’s also a very enthusiastic character,” she said. “And it’s fun to work with the other castmates — everyone’s so supportive.”

Her favorite song is the opening number, “Thoroughly Modern Millie,” in which she and the entire ensemble sing and dance together. “Millie’s admiring her new city and all the modern women she aspires to be like,” said Spiers. “It’s an upbeat number, so we have fun doing it; and it’s the introduction to the show, so everyone’s smiling and enthusiastic.”

She said people will be able to relate to many of the play’s situations, such as the scene where Millie is trying to get her boss to like her, but she’s bad at flirting. “They’ll also like the contrasting characters,” said Spiers. “For example, Millie is poor and overthinks things, but her best friend Dorothy is rich, over-the-top and vibrant.”

Playing Dorothy is junior Kylee Downie.

“She’s the archetypal damsel in distress, except she isn’t afraid to take control of the situation,” said Downie. “She’s very much the master of her own fate. She’s adventurous and all about trying new things and meeting new people. She’s kind of an old-fashioned girl, but tries to bend the rules a little. She’s used to an aristocratic lifestyle in California, but comes to New York to discover what it’s like to be an average woman in the 1920s.”

Downie likes playing Dorothy because “She’s bubbly, quirky and strong, unlike most women of that time. And she’s not afraid to speak her mind. Dorothy and Millie sing the song, ‘How the Other Half Lives,’ when they come together as friends. They realize how much they can help each other and how much potential their friendship has.”

As for the show, Downie says it has something for everyone. “It’s packed with comedy and relatable content, and it’s very engaging, both musically and visually,” she said. “And we have a variety of characters.”

Senior Christine Moon portrays Mrs. Meers, an ex-actress who’s turned to crime. “She’s driven by money and is a tough businesswoman who runs a hotel for poor actresses,” said Moon. “She pretends to care

about these girls, but really has an evil purpose.”

Moon says she’s fun to play because “She’s very out there and mischievous, and I get to add my own, little touches to her character. I also get to make large, over-the-top movements and have a funny voice. And I like singing, ‘They Don’t Know,’ about how the actresses don’t know she’s an evil, scheming person. And because of that, she thinks she’s the best actress in the world. But she shows her true colors and intentions to the audience.”

She said audiences will enjoy seeing all the glamorous, flashy costumes, and “The set will be amazing. They’ll also like the strong dynamic of the characters, ranging from evil to kindhearted. The choreography is great, and our cast members have very good chemistry with each other. And the story of a girl coming to New York to follow her dreams is very inspiring.”

Playing Jimmy Smith is sophomore Matthew Mendoza. “He’s 23 and has lived in New York for several years,” said Mendoza. “He’s charismatic and tries to make his life as fun and memorable as possible. He’s also a playboy and flirts with as many girls as he can — and he’s well-known for this. One day, he meets Millie and then his character’s dynamic and reputation start to change as he falls in love with her.”

Thrilled to have his first leading role, Mendoza said, “I like the challenge. And unlike my past characters, Jimmy has confidence. There are many, different ways to have fun with this character, connect with the audience and let them know he’s not just a playboy. There’s also this sincere part of him that he rarely shows.”

Mendoza’s favorite song is “What Do I Need with Love?” which he sings. “It’s a sneak peek at his true personality and what Jimmy’s character is truly about. It also has a variety of tempos; it starts slow and then turns into something you could jam with.”

Overall, he said, this show is “upbeat and a fun night to spend with your family. At the end, they’ll be singing the songs in their heads because of how catchy they are. And all the songs have a purpose — to tell the characters’ stories.”

ROUNDUPS

Learn What CERT Does

The Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program prepares regular citizens to safely help themselves, their families and their communities during major emergencies where first responders are delayed. And residents may learn more about them and what they do during the next meeting of the Sully District Police Station’s Citizens Advisory Committee. It’s set for Wednesday, April 11, at 7:30 p.m., in the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., in Chantilly.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, April 12, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed. Because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the

caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

Bulova to Address WFCCA

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova will be the guest speaker at the quarterly meeting of the West Fairfax County Citizens Association (WFCCA). It’s slated for Monday, April 16, at 7 p.m., in the Sully Dis

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Foust



Bulova



Cook



McKay



Kincaid



Herrity



Roessler



Keen

Confusion, Anger, Agenda Difficulties

Public safety committee meeting focuses on ICE, without ICE at the table.

BY KEN MOORE

Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust asked a series of questions to try to elicit an answer from county law enforcement about whether Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers sometimes detain and arrest people on civil warrants when assisting county officers on criminal investigations.

"Fairfax County gang task force does not have a member of ICE participating on it, is that correct?" said Foust.

Chief of Fairfax County Police, Col. Edwin C. Chief Roessler, answered first. "We're part of the Northern Virginia gang task force and there is a criminal element of ICE associated with that task force," he said, "so to answer the question, we do associate with ICE in that task force for criminal investigations."

Foust continued: "My question is, what role does ICE play on the gang task force? If a crime is committed, you don't need ICE there to enforce the law, correct?"

"We can investigate on our own," Roessler said, but "these gang members don't adhere to boundaries, so to conduct an investigation we have to cross boundaries. So, at times it's prudent to use the task force and a criminal investigator from ICE or the FBI or other federal agencies to hunt these criminals down and arrest them."

"If there is an ICE officer on your gang task force, and I understand criminal side, do you have a standing policy that says that they shall not make an arrest for a civil detainer while participating on your task force?" asked Foust.

Roessler said, "It's our goal and our general orders dictate what our police officers in Fairfax County can and can't do for the civil side of that, And it's not my goal as your chief to go out and enforce the civil portion of that."

"That's not the business that we're in," he said.

"That's what I'm trying to get at," said Foust. "Because what I perceive is you're

out in the community with one or more ICE agents who are arresting people while participating on your task force for non-criminal conduct."

"And that's what we don't want," said Roessler.

THE BOARD'S PUBLIC SAFETY committee met Tuesday, April 3, to discuss these issues together.

"Our board was looking forward to a frank and open discussion with ICE about their enforcement activities in Fairfax County, which is what ICE had agreed to originally. It is unfortunate that this opportunity was derailed," said Chairman Sharon Bulova.

ICE didn't take a seat, although Adonnis T. Smith Sr., Washington Field Office Enforcement and Removal Operations, was listed on the agenda along with Barbara M. Gonzalez, assistant director, Stakeholder Engagement - Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE).

"There was a lot of disagreement about federal participation today," said Public Safety Committee chairman and Braddock District Supervisor John Cook.

ICE officers spoke from the audience to say that they were present and ready to speak at two points during the meeting.

"We appreciate you being here," said Bulova. "There were a lot of organizations that actually asked to have a seat at the table, including ICE and including VOICE. There were others [immigrant advocates] who believed that this was going to be a public forum or a public hearing which it is not. This is a committee meeting of the Board of Supervisors."

Bulova said later on Facebook: "ICE then asked that a representative from the Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE) Office be at the table as well. Since

VOICE's mission (giving voice to victims of crimes by illegal immigrants), while admirable, was not germane to the subject of this meeting, I asked they not be a part of the discussion. ICE then presented us with an ultimatum — hear from all of us or none of us. ICE representatives chose instead to sit in the audience," Bulova wrote.

"Prior to this meeting my office also heard from pro-immigrant rights groups who wished to have a seat at the table during the meeting. They were told 'sorry' for a similar reason — their issues were off topic and this was a Board Committee Meeting and not a public forum."

Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity disagreed. "I think they are our law enforcement partners and I think they should be able to participate, but I'll respect the decision of the chairs," said Herrity. Still, ICE and its partnership with local law enforcement continued as the topic of the meeting.

FOUST QUESTIONED Col. Douglas W. Keen, Chief of Police, City of Manassas, and chairman of the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force.

"Do you allow ICE agents participating on the task force with your officers to make arrests for non-criminal conduct?"

Keen answered: "There are no ICE agents assigned to the task force. It is a local and state task force. We will work with ICE, just as the captain said, as another tool just like the FBI, DEA, Secret Service or any others. There are times we may ask for ICE assistance and they will help us on that criminal investigation."

"I think we're all comfortable with the criminal side," said Foust. "What you seem to be evading is, do they take into custody while participating on your task force persons presumed or assumed to be in violation of non-criminal immigration rules."

"I don't dictate what ICE does," answered

Keen. "That would be their policy. When they are a member of the task force, they are there for criminal apprehension purposes. "ICE, it would probably be best if they explained, if they had an opportunity, they have two different divisions, they have a criminal division and they have a civil division. The criminal division is working with us," said Keen. Roessler said: "We don't want the community to be looking at us as if we're using a criminal as a proxy to get into a house and say, 'You, you and you, come with me.'"

"I hope that's exactly accurate because that is not consistent with what I was led to believe, which was that these ICE agents do indeed take people into custody while on raids with you for violations that are not criminal activities," said Foust.

ICE had been active in Route 1 area, said Roessler, and the FCPD asked ICE to alert them when and where they are conducting raids in the county so that police know if they get a call for example for a home invasion or robbery, they won't respond.

"Obviously, they are federal law enforcement officers and they have absolute right to go into that community, I as a chief cannot override that federal right and that's where the confusion is in the community. It's not your police department in Fairfax County that's conducting the civil raids, it's ICE, and that's their job."

SHERIFF STACEY A. KINCAID informed ICE in January that the Sheriff's Office would terminate its intergovernmental service agreement (IGSA) with ICE on May 23, following the required 120-day notice.

The "Sheriff's Office will no longer hold inmates past their release date unless an ICE administrative request to detain the inmate is accompanied by a criminal detainer issued by a court," according to Kincaid. The City of Alexandria, on May 23, will be the only one of 123 jurisdictions in Virginia to maintain its intergovernmental service agreement with ICE, said Kincaid.

"Our compliance with Code of Virginia will not be compromised," she said. "Our conclusion to terminate this agreement was done after a thorough very intensive process."

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CENTRE VIEW ♦ APRIL 11-17, 2018 ♦ 3

"ICE then presented us with an ultimatum — hear from all of us or none of us. ICE representatives chose instead to sit in the audience."

— Sharon Bulova, Chairman, Board of Supervisors

"I think we need to continue cooperating with ICE to the fullest extent possible."

— Pat Herrity, Springfield Supervisor

"It's not my goal as your chief to go out and enforce the civil portion of that. That's not the business that we're in."

— Chief Edwin C. Roessler Jr.

A 'High-Spirited and Entertaining' Show

Liberty Middle
presents "Peter Pan Jr."

BY BONNIE HOBBS

Adventurous children, pirates and a boy who can fly are among the delights in store for people attending Liberty Middle School's upcoming play. It's the Broadway version of the musical, "Peter Pan Jr."

Show times are Thursday, Friday and Saturday, April 26, 27 and 28, at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$6 at the door and during school lunches, starting April 18. And the cast and crew of 60 have been rehearsing since October.

Director/Choreographer Jody Scott says her actors are not only "talented, smart and take direction well, but they also look out for each other and work together as a team. They're a happy group of kids and are all ready and excited to perform this show."

She also praised Music Director Gary Verhagen and Costume Coordinator Laura Bellis for their efforts, saying, "They've generously given of their time to do whatever's needed to help put on this play, but they love it."

It takes place in the early 1900s. Peter is a boy who never ages and grows up, but he longs to have a mother and someone who'll take care of him and tell him stories. So he visits the home of the Darling family, whose mother reads stories to the children.

But he's also mischievous, so he convinces the children to fly to Neverland with him and says the oldest one, Wendy, can be their mother. There, they encounter Capt. Hook, the Lost Boys, Brave Girls and a crocodile, and the adventure unfolds.

"This show is high-spirited and really entertaining," said Scott. "And the musical numbers are upbeat, toe-tapping and happy; people will leave with the songs in their heads. The pirates are hysterically funny, the Brave Girls are strong and smart, and everybody can see themselves in the Lost Boys, who love to have fun. The Darling children are eager to have an adventure, Capt. Hook is a commanding presence onstage and our Peter Pan really embodies the role."

The scenes take place in the Darling children's London bedroom, in Neverland forest, in the Lost Boys' underground home on Neverland Island and on a pirate ship. Peter Pan wears a forest-green outfit with matching tights, and Capt. Hook wears a velvet jacket with lace shirt sleeves, a red-velvet hat with white plume and a long, curly, black wig. The Lost Boys have scruffy clothing, the Brave Girls are in earth tones and the pirates have beards and mustaches and wear bright, jewel-tone colors.



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

The cast of Liberty Middle School's "Peter Pan Jr." wearing their commemorative T-shirts advertising their show.

Portraying Peter Pan is seventh-grader Katie Wood. "He's very stubborn and doesn't like people telling him what he needs to do," she said. "He's energetic and, when he's excited about something and puts his mind to it, he gets it done. He's friendly and outgoing, but hard to approach, because he thinks he's the best and is in charge of everyone on Neverland. So he has the power and responsibility."

Katie says it's fun playing someone "as energetic as I am. He also puts on many, different personalities and faces. And it's fantastic having a lead role — I really love it. I'm happy Ms. Scott gave me the chance. In the end, I'm going to be proud of how hard we all worked to make this show amazing." Her favorite number is "I'm Flying," which she sings with the Darling siblings, Wendy (Madison Bui), Michael (Caitlyn Barnes) and John (Kaitlyn Briest). "I love the choreography because we get to sing on the railings, and it's a blast to do it with all my best friends," said Katie. "It's really cheery, and Peter's saying how magical and dreamy it is to fly."

She said the audience will like the story's adventure and suspense and the cast's energy. "They'll also enjoy all the musical numbers and the choreography and how everyone portrays their characters in ways that make them unique," said Katie. "And dur-

ing the play, many of the characters change the way they feel."

Eighth-grader Joseph Buono plays Capt. Hook. "He doesn't like children, or even his pirates," said Joseph. "But he needs people to help take care of him, so he forces them to work. He's angry and mean because Peter Pan has been getting in the way of his business. He's also English, so he's proper and thinks he's better than everyone else."

Joseph's having fun because acting is something new for him. He also likes his part because "Capt. Hook is the villain, has enemies, is smart and witty and has a big role. And I like singing 'Hook's Waltz.' It has a variety of tones and it tells a little about his personality."

He said people will enjoy the show's action and fights, plus the "sad and happy scenes, the songs and the very talented actors. And they'll love all the characters."

His sister, seventh-grader Beth Buono, portrays Tiger Lily, who lives on Neverland. "She's a brave, strong, serious, independent, young lady," said Beth. "She likes being in control of the Brave Girls. They stick together and she's happy about it. I auditioned for this role because she's more focused on protecting others, although she usually doesn't get to have as much fun as they do."

Beth especially likes the song, "Ugh-a-Wug," which she sings with Peter Pan. "It's

a chance for Tiger Lily to have more fun, get out of her comfort zone a little and become one with the Lost Boys and Brave Girls," she said. As for the show, she said, "The audience will really like our facial expressions, movement, dancing and singing, plus the comedy."

Playing Wendy is eighth-grader Madison Bui. "She's 14 and from an aristocratic family, so she starts off as proper," said Madison. "But then she goes off with a bunch of boys and learns to let loose and become motherly toward them. She has a lot of mood changes. She idolizes her mother and wants to be a mom. She's sweet and gentle with the Lost Boys and is boy-crazy over Peter, but in a subtle and mature way."

Madison enjoys her role because "I feel like she's the most dynamic of all the characters. She goes from being uptight, prim and proper, to someone who can have fun, go with the flow and be more optimistic."

Her favorite number is her solo, "Tender Shepherd," the nighttime lullaby of Wendy and her brothers. "It's mellow and soothing and carries a lot of meaning," said Madison. "We're inviting the audience to see it and share our lives." Overall, she said, "This show is about kids who don't want to grow up, and it's touching and heartfelt. It's also humorous and lighthearted, and all ages will enjoy it."

ROUNDUPS

FROM PAGE 2

strict Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., in Chantilly.

Clean Out Medicine Cabinets

Take advantage of a free, convenient, confidential, and

safe disposal of unused or expired medications during Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout on Saturday, April 28. Drop off medications (pills or liquids only, no pressurized canisters or needles) at the Fair Oaks District Station, 12300 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax, or the Sully District Station, 4900 Stonecroft Boulevard, Chantilly, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Volunteer Drivers Sought

Meals on Wheels Drivers pick up meals and deliver them to individuals on a specific route. Routes take a maximum of two hours to deliver all meals. Deliveries are made mid-day Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays. Deliveries can be made by an individual or as part of a volunteer group. Email volunteersolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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Committee Focuses on ICE

FROM PAGE 3

Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay asked if the decision would impact criminal investigations of the gang task force.

"Little to no impact on the gang task force," answered Keen.

"Little to no impact, make sure everybody heard that," said McKay, "because facts matter and facts really matter when you are dealing with people's emotions. And when you're trying to scare people in Fairfax County into believing things that are happening that are not happening."

THE MAJORITY of the board supported Kincaid's decision.

"When you terminated the ISA, it was undoubtedly predictable on your part that there would be those who would try to make a political issue out of this, would try to scare people. I appreciate the courage you showed, you did the right thing," said Foust. "It was the right decision to make," said McKay.

"I've got to tell you, from all the officers that I've talked to and from my years on this board the number one most powerful tool we have in Fairfax County is a community that can trust and will talk to law enforcement to solve our crimes," said McKay. "What's happening at the federal level and the misinformation that's being put out ... about the decision the Sheriff made is mak-

ing that a lot harder.

"We're one of the safest jurisdictions in the country because our people trust, believe, and speak to us and help us solve crimes," McKay said. "And if we scare people that's not going to happen."

Bulova commented that it is very confusing to the immigrant community and damaging to the trust in county police that ICE agents are conducting raids in the county wearing uniforms that say "POLICE" in large letters across the back.

"It confuses and scares people when they see a uniform that says police and it's not police at all. It's ICE," said Bulova. "It may say ICE somewhere on that uniform but people see police and think it's our Fairfax County police who are actually serving as members of ICE."

HERRITY SPOKE for the minority. He was not in support of Sheriff Kincaid's decision to terminate the agreement with ICE.

"I think we need to continue cooperating with ICE to the fullest extent possible," he said. "This is about protecting our immigrant community," said Herrity. "It's human trafficking, it's drugs, it's murders, it's crime and we ought to be doing everything we can to get them off the street," he said.

"I'm very disappointed that we invited them here, we have them on the agenda, and they're not able to speak," said Herrity.



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OPINION

Expansion of Health Care in Virginia?

After years of hoping, it's possible Medicaid expansion will come on April 11; say a prayer.

The most important, impactful accomplishment of the Virginia General Assembly session for 2018 is set for Wednesday, April 11, after our newspapers' presstime. In agreeing on a budget, assembly members are expected to approve expanding Medicaid which would provide health insurance some 200,000 to 400,000 Virginians who have been living without coverage, and consequently mostly without health care.

More than 10 percent of residents of Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County do not have

health insurance.

The benefits are huge. A celebratory press release goes out any time 10 or more jobs come to any place in Virginia. But estimates are that finally accepting the available federal money to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act would generate about 30,000 jobs.

It will make all of us who live and work in Virginia healthier by ensuring that our fellow residents have access to healthcare, to medications to treat contagious illnesses, to vaccinations, to preventive and acute care. We don't want the people who ride with us on the Metro or wait in line at motor vehicles to be sick without a reasonable way to be treated. We want the people around us to be healthy. It makes everyone healthier.

Virginia has bypassed about \$10 billion by not having expanded Medicaid since it was possible.

Now is the time.

So many advocates have pressed for this for so long, that it seems almost surreal as the

possibility approaches. While I don't often pray for particular outcomes, I think a prayer for hundreds of thousands of people to receive life-affirming health care is in order.

Del. Ken Plum of Reston wrote in his weekly column: "By the time you are reading this column I will be back in Richmond for the serious work of the legislature of passing a budget for the next biennium. The outstanding issue to be resolved is the expansion of Medicaid to nearly 400,000 Virginians who do not have health care even though taxes are being collected in Virginia to pay for the program. I support the Governor in his insistence that we approve the expansion. Thanks to all the citizens who have been calling and writing supporting the program. I will be back with details on the budget issue as soon as it is resolved."

Fingers crossed.

— MARY KIMM,

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Review County Retirement System

To the Editor:

The following open letter is addressed to Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and Kathy Smith, Sully District supervisor.

My wife and I have been homeowners and taxpayers in Fairfax County since 1968. Again, we protest the increases in the overall county budget and real estate taxes. As usual, the board plans to raise the county budget and the real estate rate along with the assessment increase more than twice the inflation rate for FY 2019. The FY19 General Fund Disbursements will increase \$181.48 million or 4.42 percent over the FY2018 Adopted Budget which will be \$4.288 billion. According to Kiplinger's News Letter February 2018, the official consumer price index (inflation rate) increased 2.1 percent for calendar year 2017. With the rate increase and the real estate assessment increase, the overall increase in real estate taxes is projected to be almost an average of 5 percent. For the last five years, real estate taxes have increased 26 percent which is almost three times the inflation rate for that period.

The Educational Employees Supplementary Retirement System of Fairfax County (ERFC) is an additional supplemental plan that applies to Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) employees who are on the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and are paid the same amount of Social Security (SS) that he or she would receive at age 66. So if a teacher retires at 55 with 30 years of service, that teacher receives 75 percent of his or her retirement based on the highest three years of service and includes the SS supplement as if they were already on SS until they reach the SS age. No other county or city in the metropolitan area offers this very generous ERFC system. The proposed budget for ERFC is \$94.6 million for FY 2019. This program should be phased out for those FCPS employees less than 40 years of age and terminated for all new employees.

The Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) allows employees retirement payments prior to actual retirement. DROP allows the employee to continue to work and receive their salary for a period of up to three years. During the DROP period, the pension plan accumulates the monthly benefit in an account balance identified as payable to the member only at the end of the DROP period. The monthly benefit that is credited to the DROP

participant's account balance is calculated using service and final compensation as the date of entry in DROP, and the employee does not earn service credit toward retirement trust funds during the DROP period. In FY 2017, approximately \$43.6 million in retirement benefits were paid out of the retirement trust funds as DROP lump sum payments. For FY 2019, the DROP budget is approximately \$37 million. It is time to drop the DROP!

It is time for county officials to look at the costly defined benefit retirement systems and carefully review what the Federal Government did over 30 years ago when they went to a hybrid system called the Federal Employees Retirement System.

In addition, the county should raise the retirement age to 67, which is the SS age to retire, for all new employees which is the same position of the Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance (FCTA). Last, but certainly not least, is the Fairfax County Unfunded Pension Liability of \$5.6 billion which seems to be ignored by the County Board.

I look forward to your written responses.

Charles and Linda McAndrew
FCTA Board Member
Oak Hill

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax or www.nam-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

[support.html](http://www.nam-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See www.ophrescue.org for information and all volunteer opportunities.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Child turning 5 years old by Sept. 30? If so, contact your child's school to make arrangements for kindergarten enrollment. Most schools begin getting information together now for parents of incoming kindergartners, and many host an orientation or open house. All kindergarten programs are full-day

and located in FCPS elementary schools. Check your school's webpage or contact the school directly for specific enrollment information and dates of orientation or visit www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration.

Colin Powell Elementary School is holding kindergarten registration Monday, April 16, 9 a.m.-noon. Due to the time required to register children, the school requests that only parents come for registration. Forms and other information are available online at: www.fcps.edu/registration/general-registration-requirements.

Brookfield Elementary School will host a kindergarten registration for the 2018-2019 school year on Monday, April 16. Parents of children who will be five years old on or

before Sept. 30, 2018, and are living within the Brookfield Elementary School boundaries, should contact the school at 703-814-8700 in order to make a registration appointment.

Greenbriar East Elementary School is now accepting registration paperwork for rising Kindergartners. The Kindergarten information session is scheduled for Monday, April 16 from 2-3 p.m. Families who live within the school's boundaries and have a child who will turn 5 years of age by Sept. 30, 2018, should visit greenbriareastes.fcps.edu or call 703-633-6400 to make an appointment.

Centre Ridge Elementary School in Centreville is open for kindergarten registration for the school year 2018-

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CENTREVIEW

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A Connection Newspaper

Will Show Choir Class at Chantilly be Cut?

After community outcry, decision is put on hold for now.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

The Chantilly High community is passionate about its traditions. When the message shed outside the school was suddenly torn down, students, alumni and parents mourned the loss. And now that Chantilly's Show Choir course – and, therefore, its beloved Jazz & Pizzazz show – is in jeopardy, people are feeling the same way.

For 31 years, this four-night musical event has been a valued and integral part of the school and community. But on Wednesday, April 4, Director of Student Services Robyn Lady, who's also Chantilly's Performing Arts administrator, sent a letter to those connected to ShowStoppers, the show choir that performs in Jazz & Pizzazz. She wrote, "Given the declining interest in Show Choir ... we will not be offering this class next year."

She said Director Evan Ayars will still be teaching full-time, but that Show Choir students would have to choose other choral classes, instead. Word spread like wildfire via social media, and one of the current students started an online petition to save Show Choir.

The petition said it's "completely unfair to deprive current and future members of the love and support Show Choir offered many generations before, and even more unfair to the department and the community for discontinuing this tradition that has brought many people and families joy over the years." By Monday morning, April 9, more than 1,500 people had signed it.

Tomoko Liu said her daughter Sophi is a ShowStoppers member and transferred from South Lakes High to Chantilly to be in Show Choir here. "It was the class that

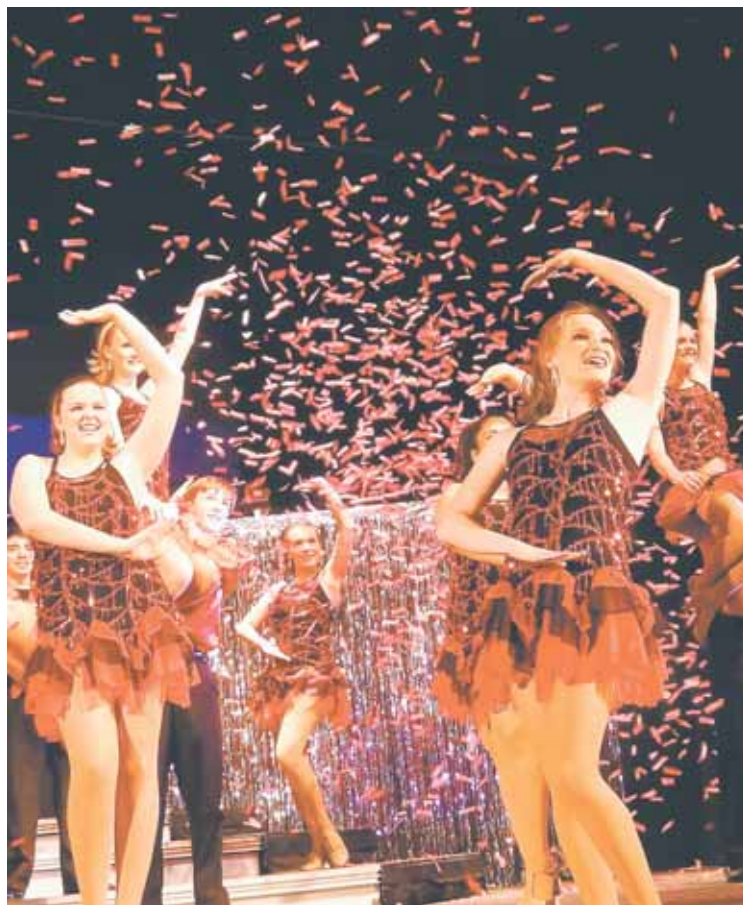
helped my daughter survive stressful, high-school life," wrote Liu. She added that this sudden decision would have a "huge, negative affect," not only on the Chantilly music families, but also on the community.

Signer Harrison W. stressed that "Show Choir was huge in Chantilly long before [TV show] 'Glee' came on the air. Sad to see an organization that was once named America's Top Show Choir be swept under the rug to completely cease to exist."

Margaret Anne Helmick, a 1998 Chantilly grad and former member of the Touch of Class Show Choir (ShowStoppers' previous name), said she's "one of many who benefited from the Chantilly's show choirs." After high school, I attended the Oberlin Music Conservatory and Manhattan School of Music on vocal scholarships." She's also won many national vocal competitions and held leading roles in national and international musical productions and credits Chantilly's Show Choir program for preparing her so well for these performances.

Caught in the crosshairs of all this controversy is Scott Poole, who's been Chantilly's principal since October and was unaware of Jazz & Pizzazz and its storied tradition at the school and in the community. He said Lady presented him with data showing that enrollment in the Show Choir course has been low, the past three years.

"And if you go back seven or eight years, it's really come down," said Poole. "There aren't many show choirs in the county; it seems like student tastes have changed. We have 22 kids signed up for next year, and



The finale of the 2015 Jazz & Pizzazz extravaganza.

and parents about cutting Show Choir before the letter went out. But, he added, "It's a good problem to have, in that people care."

His conversation with Johnson opened his eyes. "I didn't fully grasp how long a history the Show Choir has had here," said Poole. "And I didn't appreciate the emotional connection parents, students and the community had with this program."

Saturday morning, he wrote to Lady and to the entire Performing Arts Department. He said the school will put its decision on hold for now and take a closer look at the whole issue before deciding, in a month or so, what to do. He also sent a letter to concerned students and parents, explaining about the declining Show Choir enrollment, but also saying nothing is final, yet, and apologizing for how things had evolved.

"In retrospect, we handled this matter badly," wrote Poole. "We abruptly sent a letter to the community without

what kind of a show can you have with 22 kids? Nobody wants to cut the program, but if [student interest] is just not there, it's not there."

So he approved her letter and, after it went out, the petition arose and parents and School Board members began contacting him. Friday night, he called former Chantilly Principal Teresa Johnson for some context and background on the Show Choir.

Poole said Johnson told him Show Choir "had low numbers last year, but she decided the school needed to talk about it over a year. But then she left [Chantilly] and nothing happened." He also hadn't realized that no one had touched base with the students

discussing the situation with students and parents, eliciting their feedback regarding solutions, or giving everyone involved time to process it. I didn't ask the right questions or do my homework before approving the elimination of the program, and I take responsibility for my actions."

"In short, we need to have the discussions with students and parents that we should have had, before making any decision about the future of the program," he continued. "If we do anything less, we will diminish the relationship of trust and respect that makes the connection between our Performing Arts Department and our community so strong."

Diversity Displayed via Songs, Dances, Food

CIF holds annual Centreville International Showcase.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

Those attending the 8th annual Centreville International Showcase will get to travel 'round the world via singing, dancing and cuisine. This entertaining event is slated for Saturday, April 21, from 5:30-9 p.m., at the Korean Central Presbyterian Church, 15451 Lee Highway (Route 29) in Centreville, near Bull Run Elementary.

The Centreville Immigration Forum (CIF) sponsors this festival and invites the community to share in the experience. It features food from local restaurants, performances by representatives of their various countries, a silent auction and a 50/50 raffle. This family-friendly, cultural celebration will also offer cuisine and entertainment from places such as Guatemala, India, Honduras, Peru, Ghana, Korea and Ireland.



Young Korean dancers from the JUB Cultural Center in Centreville.

The idea is to bring together the community for a lively and colorful evening of fellowship and fun. No admission is charged, but the showcase raises funds for CIF through a silent auction, 50/50 raffle, food sales and donations during the event.

The festivities kick off with a 5:30 p.m. opening ceremony, followed by a variety of international entertainment. Encore performance will follow.

SEE DIVERSITY, PAGE 8

Puppets, Petting Zoo, Music, Food Trucks

Springfest comes to Sully Historic Site in Chantilly.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

Springfest is Fairfax County's official Earth Day and Arbor Day celebration; and from now on, it's being held at the Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, in Chantilly. It's slated for Saturday, April 21, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., rain or shine.

Put on by the Clean Fairfax Council and the Fairfax County Park Authority, it offers workshops, vendors and activities to help area residents improve their health and the environment. Accordingly, the theme for 2018 is "Healthy Planet-Healthy People."

This event normally attracts nearly 5,000 people from across the county, and this year should be no exception, as a variety of fun-filled activities are planned for people of all ages. Admission is free; parking is \$5.

Entertainment includes the Recycling Pirates puppet show, poetry contest showcase, petting zoo, Touch-a-Truck, and food trucks. Festival attendees may also learn about Fairfax parks, pet an alpaca, run through an environmental obstacle course and participate in environmental crafts. In addition, they can check out the bees and the trees, consult with master gardeners and buy plants for their gardens. For more information, go to www.springfestfairfax.org.

More than 75 vendors, exhibitors and food trucks will participate. The food vendors include: Gordon's

Springfest Stage

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

10 a.m. - Ted Garber - A multi-instrumentalist who captivates audiences with his genre-bending, "BluesAmericanaRock" style and classic showmanship.

10:30 a.m. - Poetry Contest

11 a.m. - Recycling Pirates Puppet Show - Join Capt. Jack Sparetire as he leads a quest across the urban seas, looking for things to recycle, reuse, reduce and repair.

Noon - Tree Proclamation

12:30 p.m. - Ted Garber

1 p.m. - Recycling Pirates Puppet Show

2 p.m. - Fun Fitness Demonstration

2:30 p.m. - Ted Garber

Grill, Danibelle's Lebanese Cuisine, Mali's Kitchen, Smash & Shake, Nader's Food Services, Colonial Kettle Corn, Nitro's Creamery ice cream, Dirty South Deli, PokeMan Hawaiian food truck, Casero Creations Bolivian food, Dave's Dogs, Borek-G and Stay Cheesy.

The nonprofit Clean Fairfax Council works to keep the region clean, green and sustainable. Learn more about Clean Fairfax at www.cleanfairfax.org or call 703-324-5471 or email: cfc@cleanfairfax.org. Volunteers are needed to assist throughout the day in a variety of capacities. See the Springfest or Clean Fairfax websites to sign up.



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

Operating the sidearm loader of this Fairfax County trash truck at a 2016 Touch-A-Truck event in Chantilly is Arnold Reyes, then 10. Touch-A-Truck will be part of Springfest.

Diversity Displayed via Songs, Dances, Food

FROM PAGE 7

mances will be presented by the McNeill-James School of Irish Dance and Kofi Dennis and Friends African Drumming, as well as several other groups. They include the Huellas Hondureñas dance troupe, JUB Korean Cultural Center, the Washington Area Senior Harmonica Ensemble, Tinkuy Music of the Andes, and the Korean Central Senior Center Autoharp Players.

Dinner begins at 6 p.m. with international food dishes such as tamales, pupusas, kimchap and pollo a la brasa. Among the local restaurants returning are Chicken Latino, Two Amigos, Ciao Osteria, Guapo's, El Quetzal Grill and The Auld Shebeen. Par-

ticipating, as well, will be My Thai Place and Cuna del Sol,

For more information, and to see the latest updates about the entertainment and food, see www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org. Also go to the website to purchase dinner tickets, see the early-bird specials and reserve a table in advance to enjoy the performers up close.

Use Pay Pal or mail a check payable to Centreville Immigration Forum to: Centreville Labor Resource Center, 5956 Centreville Crest Lane, Centreville, VA 20121, and specify that it's for the show-

Precision drummers from the JUB Cultural Center.



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

ONGOING

Fitness for 50+. Daytime hours, Monday-Friday at Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Jazzercise Lite, Zumba Gold, Hot Hula Fitness (dancing Polynesian style), Strength Training, Qi Gong, Tai Chi and more. Membership is \$48 a year, and waivers are available. Email lynne.lott@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-322-4475 for more.

History Volunteers Needed. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum needs history buffs. The Museum

offers a variety of volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Email volunteers@fairfax-station.org or call 703-945-7483 to explore opportunities. The Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. It is open every Sunday, except holidays, from 1-4 p.m. www.fairfax-station.org, 703-425-9225.

Art Guild of Clifton Exhibit. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. at Clifton Wine Shop, 7145 Main St., Clifton. Includes oil paintings of European settings;

doors, windows, and flower shops. Free. Call 703-409-0919 for more.

Carolina Shag Dance. Wednesdays, 6:30-10 p.m. at Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m.; no partners needed; dinner menu at 6:45 p.m. Tickets are \$8. Visit www.nvshag.org for more.

Open Rehearsal. Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. at Lord of Life church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Centreville. The Fairfax Jubil-Aires barbershop chorus invites men of all ages who enjoy singing. Free. Visit

www.fairfaxjubilairs.org for more. **Live After Five.** Fridays at 5:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Every Friday night a band plays on the patio of the winery. Free to attend. Visit www.wineryatbullrun.com for a full schedule.

LIBRARY FUN

Toddlin' Twos. Tuesdays, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Early literacy storytime with songs and

activities included. Age 2 with caregiver, free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Storytime for Three to Fives. Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Stories and activities for children age 3-5 with caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Plant Clinic. Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.



PHOTO MERRIFIELD GARDEN CENTER

The colors of Camellia blooms can be enjoyed now, says David Watkins of Merrifield Garden Center.



PHOTO AMERICAN PLANT

Preparing a spring garden includes pruning, mulching and fertilizing, says Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda.

Spring in Bloom

Preparing and planning a colorful warm-weather garden.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

One of the most anticipated rites of spring is the vibrancy of the first blooms on flowers and trees. However, this beauty can only be savored after the weeding, pruning and planting are finished. While preparing and planning a spring garden is not an effortless endeavor, local landscaping gurus say that an organized plan can make it more manageable.

"The first thing you need to do is cut back any ornamental grasses like Liriope two to four inches off the ground so the brown, tired-looking leaves are gone before the new leaves start to grow," said David Watkins, general manager of Merrifield Garden Center. "If you wait too long it's tough to separate old from new and you end up getting brown on the new leaves."

Removing all of the leaves and other debris from the flowerbed is the next step, advises Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda. "Cut back any perennials or ornamental grasses that have not already been cut back and prune out any dead branches from existing shrubs," he said. "I fertilize at this point with ... a slow-release, organic fertilizer that works for blooming and evergreen plants. Lastly I put down a fresh layer of mulch and then the beds are ready for spring."

Preparing to have a perfectly manicured lawn for spring begins by raking removing all of the fallen leaves, adds Davis. "Having your PH tested would be a good idea because now would be the time to put down lime to get your soil to the correct acidity level which is 5.8 to 6.5," he said. "This is also the time to put down pre-emergent [herbicides] to keep the weeds from coming up, but you have to remember, if you put down a pre-emergent you cannot over seed for six to 12 weeks, depending on the product you are using."

Cutting away dead or overgrown branches to stimulate new growth comes next, says Watkins. "I would prune any branches on

shrubs and trees that are crisscrossing and rubbing against each other," he said. "Then edge, mulch and fertilize your plants. Remove old mulch first and put down two to three inches of new mulch, but make sure you don't put it too close to the trunk of the plant."

When whipping a garden into shape for spring, Alexandria-based landscape designer Ruth Tinsley believes in engaging the senses. "If you plant fragrant spring flowers like Honeysuckle, Phlox, Butterfly Bush and roses, they will give you a pleasant aroma when you are walking through your yard or garden," she said. "Plant them in large swaths to get the biggest impact."

Butterfly Bush and Stock are two flowering plants that do double-duty, advises Tinsley. "They not only have a nice fragrance, but they will add beautiful color to your yard or garden. Butterfly bush is relatively hearty and has vibrant pink and purple blooms, and Stock comes in a vivid, dark-red color."

Until temperatures are warm on a consistent basis, Davis offers a caveat about planting flowers. "I would only plant Pansies and Violas for flowers outside," he said. "They will give you good color all the way up to the time to plant summer annuals, which is when we have sustained night time temps around 55 degrees, usually around mid-April. For perennials about the only thing you can plant now would be hellebores."

"Forsythia bushes are blooming now. They're one of the first to bloom," added Watkins. "Shortly Camellias and Azaleas will start to bloom."

Options for plants that can tolerate cooler temperatures are plentiful, advises Watkins. "All of your trees and shrubs can be planted now and it's great to get your garden started early so there's less maintenance in the summer," he said. "All of our ornamental trees like Cherry, Redbud, Crabapple and Dogwood can be planted now."

"As for shrubs, you can plant anything right now as long as it has been acclimated and does not have new tender growth," added Davis. "We have all of our plants that are tender either in our greenhouses or covered with frost blankets until the temperatures warm up."



PHOTO AMERICAN PLANT

Pansies and Violas can be planted now to offer bright colors to a spring garden, says Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda.

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NEWS



Damages to the clubhouse in the 5400 block of Calamint Court are estimated at \$120,000.

Fire Damages Clubhouse

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue responded on Friday, April 6, at approximately 8:37 p.m. to reports of a fire in a clubhouse in the 5400 block of Calamint Court in Centreville.

Upon arrival, units observed fire coming from the clubhouse. Crews fought and extinguished the majority of the fire from outside. A small natural gas fed fire remained under control until the gas company arrived and turned off an underground valve. There were no reported firefighter or civilian injuries.

No one was in the clubhouse at the time of the fire. A passerby called 911 after seeing flames coming from the structure.

The fire originated on the exterior of the structure within the trash can corral. The cause of the fire is accidental in nature. Significant damage to the clubhouse was attributed to the outside fire causing a failure of the gas meter lines. The natural gas fuel fire was rapidly propelled through the structure due to the high winds. Damages are estimated at \$120,000.

Performing in Cherry Blossom Parade

LineDance4You owner, Danielle Schill will be leading a team of dancers in the National Cherry Blossom Parade on April 14. Based in Herndon, LineDance4You was founded in 2005 and provides free line dance lessons all over the DC area with its flagship venue at Revolution Darts & Billiards (formerly Fast Eddies) in Centreville.

Schill will be leading a group of 64 dancers as they perform line and patterned partner dances with national recording artist Ty Herndon and rising country stars Temecula Road. The parade will broadcast nationwide on ABC affiliates beginning at 10 a.m. Dancers will perform a montage of known couples dances and Schill's own choreography, written specifically for this event.

The dancers performing attend regular classes in Centreville, Leesburg, Manassas, or Bunker Hill, W.Va.

"We have such a dynamic and fun loving group of dancers. Their personalities show through when they dance which makes it so much fun to watch!" Schill said.

LineDance4You offers free line dance lessons at DC area venues four nights/week and at multiple events in Northern Virginia with three staff instructors. They have been featured on Let's Talk Live on NewsChannel8 and two segments of "Dancing at Dawn" on WJLA/ABC7. Schill and her students have performed alongside Rascal Flatts, Taylor Swift and Keith Anderson to name a few. Her company performs annually at Joe Gibbs' Country Fair & Auctions as well events for Relay for Life, The Robert Duvall Children's Fund and many others over their 13-year tenure. To learn more about LineDance4You, see www.LineDance4You.com.

Obituary  On Sunday, April 8th, 2018, Constance Marie Podratsky, age 79 of Centreville, Virginia passed away at her home. Beloved wife of 57 years to James Anthony Podratsky and mother to James Eric Podratsky of Haymarket, Virginia and Tracie Anne Below of Winterville, North Carolina. She found great joy in her five grandchildren, Kylie, Morgan and Brooke Podratsky of Haymarket and Anna and Andrew Below of Winterville. She was preceded in death by her parents, Joseph and Anna Mae Sobditch of Johnstown, PA and sister Donna Meyers of Johnstown, PA. She is survived by her husband, children, grandchildren and sister Mary Louise Sefcik of Johnstown, PA, as well as numerous nieces and nephews. There will be a funeral Mass on Monday, April 16, 2018 at 10:00 am at St. Timothy Catholic Church, 13807 Polar Tree Road, Chantilly Virginia, 20151. A celebration of her life will be held at Dominion Valley Country Club, 15200 Arnold Palmer Drive, Haymarket VA 20169 at 12:30pm Monday, April 16, 2018. Flowers will be received at Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home 9902 Braddock Road, Fairfax Virginia 22032 or St. Timothy Catholic Church. Memorial gifts can be made in her honor to Catholic Charities.	Obituary	Obituary
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BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

19. Forms and other information are available on line at <https://www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration>. They are also available in the front office. Call 703-227-2600 with questions.

Greenbriar West Elementary School is now accepting information for next year's Kindergarten classes. Families who live within the school's boundaries and have a child who will turn 5 years of age by Sept. 30, 2018, call the school office at 703-633-6700.

THURSDAY/APRIL 12

FY 2019 Budget Meetings. 1 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center (Board Auditorium), 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The advertised budget plan can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/advertised-budget-plan. Sign up to speak at the public hearings on the FY 2019 budget at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speakers-form or call 703-324-3151.

FRIDAY/APRIL 13

ALDI Hiring Event. 7 a.m.-7 p.m. at ALDI, 13920A Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Chantilly. ALDI will host hiring events for its stores in Fair Lakes. Known for offering market-leading wages and health insurance, ALDI is one of the fastest growing retailers in the U.S., creating new opportunities for people locally and nationwide. Visit careers.aldi.us.

Collaborative IEP Meetings: Parents as Partners. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 100, Dunn Loring. Parents are essential partners in the special education process. Join us for this important workshop to learn more about the IEP process and it's components, your role in the IEP meeting, responsibilities of the IEP team members, and planning for your child's IEP meeting. Visit www.fcps.edu/node/28279.

SATURDAY/APRIL 14

Self Defense for All Women. 12:30-2:30 p.m. at Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Delta Defense: A Complete Guide to Self Defense for All Women – join the Fairfax County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. for a free workshop on self-defense. The event is free and open to the public. Register at www.fcacdst.org.

MONDAY/APRIL 16

Assistance League Meeting. 10 a.m.-noon at Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Assistance League of Northern Virginia invites community members to attend its Regular Monthly Meeting. New members welcome. Learn about the nonprofit's 2017-2018 programs, including Weekend Food for Kids and Reading Express. Pre-meeting social starts at 9:30 a.m. Free email gronbiz@aol.com or visit www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org.

SUNDAY/APRIL 18

REVIVE! Training. 3 p.m. at 4213 Walney Road, Chantilly. REVIVE! trains individuals on what to do and not to do in an overdose situation, how to administer naloxone, and what to do afterwards. Each attendee also receives a free REVIVE! kit, which includes all the supplies needed to administer naloxone. The medication itself can be acquired at a pharmacy after completing the training. Attendees also receive a safety plan to help individuals prevent overdose if they relapse. REVIVE! is a program of the Commonwealth of Virginia that makes naloxone (Narcan) available to lay rescuers to reverse opioid overdoses. Opioids include licit medications like hydrocodone and oxycodone, in addition to illicit drugs like heroin. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/facility/a-new-beginning for more information. Advance registration required at 703 502-7021 or 703 502-7016.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/APRIL 20-21

Westfield Mulch Delivery. Mulch delivery was postponed due to inclement weather. Delivery will take place Friday, April 20 and Saturday, April 21.

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It's A Miracle (Not a Cancer Column) ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... that the green, cotton, chino-type casual-Friday pants I often wear on -in-the-office-Thursdays, lasted as long as they did. Given the number of years I've been stuffing myself into them (not every Thursday mind you, but very regularly), and the weight I've gained, especially since the ultra low point during heavy duty chemotherapy nine years ago, the miracle is that these pants hadn't split wide open on any number of previous occasions.

As it actually happened yesterday, the split was gradual, not along a seam and not offensive to anybody, least of all, me.

And though the tear was understandable, given the psi (pounds per square inch) of pressure they were under, the loss however expected was sad nonetheless. For someone who exults in a limited wardrobe as much as I do, the reduction in available garments I choose to wear – repeatedly, is impactful.

Hardly do I have too many other go-to-pants in the closet. Considering my lack of interest, lack of need and lack of properly fitting alternatives hanging in the balance, when a split occurs, such as the one I've described "heretofore," (Ben Affleck in "Good Will Hunting"), not only is the loss palpable, it is downright inconvenient. Now what? Not that my appearance is ever a priority, but I'd rather not dress for failure.

The problem is, when your clothing options can be characterized as "either or," you're in a bind which, given the pounds that have been added over the winter (let's be honest; more like the preceding fall, summer, spring, winter and fall), you're constantly challenged, especially when attempting to zip up your fly and/or button your pants. Talk about a pointless effort.

If there was a cash reward for such failure, I'd be basking somewhere warm, in semi retirement – with an elastic waistband to do my bidding.

"But alas, poor Yurick." No such reward exists, but thankfully, elastic waistbands do, and not just on underwear, bathing suits, shorts and sweatpants. The question becomes then: How committed do I want to become to such elasticity? Isn't it kind of a slippery slope to rubberize my waistline? My fear is, once I go elastic, I may never go back, and in never going back, I'm also afraid there may be no stopping me, if you know what I mean? And if I'm not to be stopped then am I prepared to live with myself, my ever-expanding self, that is?

I imagine my oncologist wouldn't approve. And I know my internal medicine doctor wouldn't approve (I've already received some electronic advisories to that effect); and I know with 100 percent certainty that my wife, Dina wouldn't approve. She might have married me "in sickness and health, and thick and thin," but she'd much rather I be thin than thick.

Granted, I may be mixing metaphors here, but I trust you get my point. She liked me the way I was, and sort of likes me the way I am, but I'm doubtful she would like me nearly as much if I were to morph into another being.

Ergo, the future is now. Do I continue to pack on the pounds and have less and less clothing that fits – and fewer and fewer excuses as to why that old thing seems to be that same old thing, again; buy new clothes that reflect and lock in my girth, or bite the bullet – not the Entenmann's Pop'ems, Hostess CupCakes, Oreo Mega Stuf cookies or M&M's plain/peanut butter candy and try to lose weight and save some face, literally?

I believe I know the answer. I'm just not sure of the start date. It better be soon because the underwear I bought myself for Christmas is beginning to lose its shape and I'm pretty sure I know the reason; and it's not a manufacturer's defect.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Fitness for 50+. Daytime hours, Monday-Friday at Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Jazzercise Lite, Zumba Gold, Hot Hula Fitness (dancing Polynesian style), Strength Training, Qi Gong, Tai Chi and more. Membership is \$48 a year, and waivers are available. Email lynnne.lott@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-322-4475 for more.

FRIDAY/APRIL 13

Home School Day. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly. Homeschooling families: experience educational programming in aviation and aerospace at Udvar-Hazy's first Home School Day. Experience STEAM lessons and resources and participate in hands-on educational workshops with other homeschool families. Open to home school students, pre-K through high school. Students must be accompanied by an adult chaperone. Free, parking is \$15. Register at airandspace.si.edu/events/home-school-day.

SATURDAY/APRIL 14

Sensory-Friendly Music and Motion. 3:30-4:15 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Mr. Matt presents an inclusive music class designed to engage special kids through songs, movement, and stories. All ages. Visit

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/chantilly-regional for more.

SUNDAY/APRIL 15

The Great British Fly-In. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly. The British are coming to northern Virginia. The Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center will hold "The Great British Fly-In" in partnership with Great Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) as part of the 100th anniversary celebration of the RAF, the oldest air force in the world. The event will feature over a dozen former RAF and other military aircraft, flown in for one day only. Call 703-572-4118 or visit airandspace.si.edu/events/great-british-fly-in.

Railroad Technology Exhibit. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. A special exhibit highlighting the impact of technology improvements in railroading, including advances introduced by area residents. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

MONDAY/APRIL 16

Gardening Presentation. 7 p.m. at Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Centreville Garden Club presents "Herb Gardening & Culinary Uses." Meetings are generally the 3rd Monday of each month. Visitors & new members welcome. Learn more at centrevillegardenclub.blogspot.com or email



At 4 a.m., Meghan Bryan, the waitress, falls asleep, as extreme shoppers Meghan Hawley (left) and Elizabeth Colandene wonder what to do next, in David MacGregor's comedy, "Black Friday."

centrevillegardenclub@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 21

SpringFest Fairfax. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Participate in a day full of free, environmental, and

health-focused family-friendly activities and games at this year's SpringFest Fairfax—a celebration of Earth and Arbor Days. Admission is free and parking is \$5 per car. Call 703-324-5470 or 571-338-6710 or visit www.springfestfairfax.org.

Student Poetry: Celebrate the

10 x 10 x Infinity Short Comedy Play Festival

An interfering mother attempts to "out" her gay son...A scientist creates the 'perfect' woman, who thinks she's too good for him In the wee hours of Black Friday, two sisters plot, in military precision, their shopping strategy for the day, while their waitress falls asleep in their scrambled eggs.... Infinity Stage presents its 2018 10 x 10 x Infinity Short Comedy Play festival — ten 10-minute comedies selected from over 350 submissions. Friday, April 20-Saturday, April 21, mixer at 7 p.m.; show starts at 8 p.m. both nights at Epicure Café, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Purchase food and drink before the show and during intermission. Seating is limited. Tickets are \$20 at www.infinitystage.com.

Senses. 10:30 a.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. To honor National Poetry Month in April, the Park Authority asked young people in grades K-8 to submit poems inspired by what they see, hear, touch, smell or taste in Fairfax County parks. The two winners in each grade category (K-2, 3-5 and 6-8) will share their works at the Springfest Poetry Showcase. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks.

Centreville International Showcase. 5:30-9 p.m. at Korean Central Presbyterian Church, 8514 Forrester Blvd. Springfield. The 8th Annual Centreville International Showcase will feature food, song and dance reflecting the cultural heritage of Centreville residents including Guatemala, Ireland, India, Ghana, Peru and Korea. Admission is free. The showcase raises money for CIF through the Showcase Silent Auction, 50/50 Raffle, food sales, and donations during the evening. Contact the Centreville Labor Resource Center at contact@CentrevilleLRC.org, 703-543-6272 or centrevilleimmigrationforum.org/.

SUNDAY/APRIL 22

NTRAK Scale Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold an N gauge model train show. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 25

Adventures in Art. 7-8 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Explore the world of art through stories and art projects. Come dressed to get messy. Ages 4-7 with a caregiver. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/chantilly-regional for more.

SATURDAY/APRIL 28

Fairfax Run for the Children. 8 a.m. at Fairfax County Courthouse Complex, 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Join Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for the 8th Annual 8K and 3K races. The superhero-themed race attracts nearly 1,000 runners and walkers, 250 volunteers, and raises almost \$85,000 each year to support Fairfax CASA's advocacy work with abused and neglected children in the community. Visit www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com/.

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Easter
AT CENTREVILLE BAPTIST

Easter Celebration Services

Sunday, April 1

6:30 am Sunrise Service

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